

R 150840Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY ASMARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0294
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
CIA WASHDC
CJTTF-HOA J2X CAMP LEMONIER DJ
COMUSNAVCENT
DIA WASHDC
HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
JICCENT MACDILL AFB FL
NSC WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 000159

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/TIA/ITA, DS/IP/SPC/SO, AF/E,
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/15/2029

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [ER](#)

SUBJECT: LATE NIGHT SEARCH OF ASMARA HOTEL FOR SUSPICIOUS
PERSONS

REF: ASMARA 156

Classified By: CDA Melinda Tabler-Stone for Reason 1.4 (d)

11. (C) Eritrean soldiers and police raided the Nyala Hotel from 0100-0400 hrs on 05/13/09. An embassy source told RSO she and the rest of the guests of the 50-room hotel were woken up by soldiers as they went room to room. The soldiers searched the each room, under the beds and in the closets. The source complained to a police colleague, thinking this search was related to the increased military presence in Asmara as the May 24th Independence Day approaches (Reftel). The police contact said he was ordered to immediately search the Nyala Hotel in response to a possible threat, NFI, and that the search was unrelated to the existing military presence in Asmara. The patrons in the bar were not searched, presumably because they were members of the Eritrean National Security Organization (ENSO) who monitor the hotel and its occupants. NOTE: The Nyala Hotel is an Eritrean government (GSE) owned/operated hotel. The GSE closely monitors all guests who stay at hotels in Asmara and RSO has received information of other expat guests who have had their rooms searched in the past. END NOTE.

12. (C) Post Comments: Post is not sure what type of threat, if any, prompted this search. RSO has not received any information of similar types of incidents at other Asmara hotels. This is the first instance in recent history of the GSE searching a hotel in this fashion.

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